

# The Ford International Weekly THE DEARBORN INDEPENDENT

By the  
Year One Dollar

Dearborn, Michigan, July 17, 1920

Single  
Copy Five Cents

## Will Americans Stand for It?

**D**ISAPPOINTED by the utter absence of public spirit and responsibility in the national conventions of the Republican and Democratic parties, the independent American people have succumbed to a sense of deep disgust for partisan politics in general. This is a most wholesome reaction and it would promise well for the nation, were there not danger of a further reaction toward apathy.

The politicians count more confidently than the people realize on that interval of time which stretches between the summer conventions and the November election. If the election were to be held today, and if the law required half the number of votes to be cast as were cast at the last Presidential election before a candidate could be chosen, there would not be enough votes cast today to elect either of the candidates to the office for which the parties have chosen them.

The Republican Convention was openly and shamelessly dominated by the financial representatives of the powers that pull governmental influences like strings. The party's own methods were clogged and soiled with shameless money scandals. Progressivism and clean republicanism were snubbed, insulted and crushed at every turn. The delegates were euchred, wearied, driven and deceived. And the candidate who emerged from this chaos was even more colorless than the Republican Platform, if anything more colorless can be conceived.

The Democratic Convention was, if anything, a degree worse, because there was an attempt made at San Francisco which had no parallel at Chicago—the convention was at least given a flaming opportunity to declare its adherence to the moral advance made by the American people with regard to the liquor traffic. But the hand of the defunct and disgraceful whisky business was heavy upon the men who controlled that convention. Paid agents, who were both public officials and private retainers, were in evidence everywhere. There was no question, not even the League of Nations, which received the slavish attention which booze received. The whole convention resembled more a "hang over" from the saloon regime than a gathering of American citizens selected to formulate policies for the solution of the problems which harass the nation and the world. And a candidate, as unknown and as amenable to control as the Republican candidate, was put forth for the high office of President.

The defeat of McAdoo and the defeat of the movement to insert a wet plank in the platform were the two strong actions of the Democratic Convention, but these were neutralized by the selection of Cox. The McAdoo candidacy was one of the most cleverly engineered pieces of political shrewdness in the party annals of the United States. That it was heavily financed is a foregone conclusion, but the utmost endeavors of skilled investigators failed to reveal its source, that is, with a degree of certainty that would justify public exposure. Its source, however, is generally known, and the defeat of McAdoo was more than the defeat of a man; it was the defeat of a group whose exposure and the destruction of whose power is the most needed reform in the United States and the world today.

There is now no choice whatever between Republican and Democratic candidates, between Republican and Democratic platforms, or, for that matter, between Republican and Democratic parties. The people have been treated like children; their highest hopes have been flouted; their best

beliefs have been buried beneath mountains of partisan slush and filth.

The question is, Will the people stand it? Have they submitted to so much bulldozing at the hands of the politicians and the parties, that they have lost their sense of ownership of their own government?

There is no question whatever about the widespread public disgust: the question is, How will it emerge? Will it die down into apathy, or will it flame forth into the protest of a Citizens' Movement with a Citizens' Candidate?

It is very doubtful that any party today has the definite cohesion of other years. We hear everlasting talk about "the party" from both Democrats and Republicans. But where is it? It appears that the "party" consists of the men who meet in national convention, and no one else. These "parties" do what they please and then go out and bid for the suffrages of the American people.

There is no reason whatever why the choice of the American people should be limited to Cox or Harding, to the spineless Republican platform or the dead Democratic platform. The American people are too big, their problems too pressing, to permit them to stand on either platform.

Third parties have fallen into disrepute because their sole purpose heretofore has been to boost somebody into office; when they failed to do that they were cast aside. Theodore Roosevelt led out of the Republican party the best blood in it, the young men of the party whose ideals had not been besmirched and whose loyalty to their country had not been weakened by party shackles. But when they proved to be numerically too weak to elect him, although they were morally so strong as to throw a creative shock into the conscience and will of the nation, he left them and went back. Since that failure, which was the failure of an individual and not a movement, third parties have been regarded with doubts.

But a movement of the American people, in rebuke of both the subservient Democratic and Republican parties, would not be the usual "third party"—it would be the Nation seizing again its own control out of unworthy hands.

The old parties have no divine right. What a party convention does, need not be received loyally, as if it were an act of government. The people now know—all of the people know—that the last two national conventions were deliberate caucuses, secret in their real work, for the purpose of "putting over" on the people something that the people do not want, and against which they will be in rebellion before another four years.

Whether the people will take supinely what is given them, or exercise their free power to name their own candidate and make their own platform; whether they will require that their nose be rubbed still deeper in the contempt which the politicians have for them, or will make an end of the present race of politicians at once, is for the immediate future to reveal.

Will there be a clean-up at Washington under Cox or under Harding? Certainly there will be no ouster of the secret rulers of the United States under a Republican or a Democratic regime.

If the people want a clean-up, they must act at once, they must act deliberately, they must act without reference to the precedents set by the discredited parties, and they must act with a confidence in their supreme control over all their affairs.